

## Forestry

### Background

The sub-alpine and lower elevations of the PUA are covered by boreal forest. There are six general forest cover types in the area. The first cover type consists of a predominately Cottonwood/Poplar forest, this type occurs mostly in the riparian areas of the KRPUA. The second type is a mixed Cottonwood/Poplar and White Spruce type with Cottonwood/Poplar or White Spruce being the predominate species depending on the location of the stand. The third forest cover type is a stand that is predominately White Spruce. The fourth forest type is a mixed species type consisting of Cottonwood/Poplar, White Spruce, Paper Birch and Quaking Aspen. The fifth type is a predominately Paper Birch type usually occurring on the more upland sites of the KRPUA and the sixth type is predominately Quaking Aspen and has the smallest acreage in the area, also occurring on the more upland sites. Alder and Willow (spp) are present in all of the cover types but are most prevalent in the riparian areas. Many wildlife species use the forested habitat on the valley floor and sub-alpine environments. Large furbearers use forested areas for cover and forage. Birds use them for nesting, feeding and roosting. Forested riparian areas provide shade to cool waterbodies and woody debris that provides fish habitat.

Although no commercial timber harvesting has occurred in recent years, some areas within the Public Use Area have been harvested in the past. Commercial timber harvesting to enhance wildlife habitat and to regenerate forests for the early successional stage species may occur in the KRPUA. The Division of Forestry (DOF) has not identified any firewood collection areas nor issued permits for personal or commercial firewood cutting, although some incidental harvesting of firewood does occur in the KRPUA. Because of high heating fuel prices, DOF may consider identifying firewood collection area(s) within the PUA in the future.

With many recreation users concentrated in one area with residences located nearby, forest fire is a major concern. Wildland fires, unattended campfires and bonfires have become a common occurrence in recent years.

### Goal

- Maintain forested areas for forest regeneration, wildlife and fish habitat, and protect users and nearby residences from wildfires.

**Management Guideline**

- Permits for commercial or personal use firewood harvest<sup>3</sup>, may be authorized in the PUA after a collection area is identified by DOF and DMLW, but shall not be located in the Rippy Non-motorized Area if a feasible alternative location exists.
- Develop regulations that prevent the over-harvest of non-timber products for commercial purposes; limit where fires may be built; limit the size of fires; and regulate the type of material that may be burned.\*
- DOF may conduct timber removal for such administrative purposes as timber salvage, habitat manipulation, fire fuel reduction, or other purposes as determined appropriate by DNR. Such operations may occur in throughout the PUA, including the proposed Rippy Non-motorized Area.

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<sup>3</sup> Persons may still harvest dead and down trees without prior written authorization from DNR for personal use warming and/or cooking fires.

\* This guideline is currently included in phase one proposed regulations (11 AAC 96.15).